

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Dakota?

There was no objection.

ETHANOL'S POSITIVE ENERGY BALANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to again set the record straight regarding one of the persistent urban myths about ethanol and other renewable fuels. Yet again in the past couple of weeks I read about another study that contains faulty and outdated assumptions, analysis and conclusions about the net energy balance of producing renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel.

Whether produced from corn or other grains or biomass, ethanol production has matured into an extremely energy-efficient process. As you would expect with any developing industry, technological advances have greatly improved these efficiencies over the years. Unfortunately, some academic studies choose to ignore these improvements.

Farmers are much more efficient today than they were in years past. They get more bushels of corn from an acre of land than we did 25 years ago. Some areas have seen yield improvements of 45 percent or more. Moreover, they do it using far less energy. Farmers today use precision and no-till farming to greatly reduce tillage trips and chemical applications. The efficiency of fertilizer and pesticide production also has greatly improved over the years.

What is more, the process of turning this corn into ethanol has greatly improved. Mechanical and biological advancements in the process mean that we get more ethanol from a bushel of corn than we used to. All of these developments have a significant and positive impact on the net energy balance of ethanol production.

This fact has been confirmed by countless analyses. A recent study by the Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory found that for every 100 BTUs of energy used to produce ethanol, 135 BTUs of ethanol are produced. That is because corn plants are extremely efficient solar panels. USDA analysis has found that corn farmers use about half the energy

to produce a bushel of corn than they did just 25 years ago.

And the industry is not resting on its laurels. Research continues into ethanol production from feed stock such as rice straw, corn stover, and sugar cane waste. These should even further reduce fossil energy use and improve net energy balance. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, ethanol produced from these sources generates 13.2 BTUs of energy for every BTU of fossil energy consumed.

Finally, I will share with my colleagues an important point that was raised yesterday in an Agriculture Committee hearing on renewable fuels. Calculating and arguing over the net energy balance of ethanol, petroleum and any other energy source is not even the most relevant inquiry. From an economic standpoint, the pertinent question really should be, what does it cost to put a gallon of fuel in my gas tank when and where I want to?

Based on that inquiry, ethanol is clearly winning that contest today. Today in Sioux Falls, South Dakota you can go to any Get-n-Go gas station in the city and purchase a gallon of E85, a blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline for \$1.79, whereas a gallon of premium gasoline costs \$2.39. If you know how frugal South Dakotans are, I do not have to tell you which pump they are lining up behind.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. A year ago today, the 9/11 Commission released its report. This report outlined 41 recommendations to protect this Nation from future terrorist attacks.

It is crucial we ensure the implementation of these recommendations.

The 9/11 Commission produced what I feel is a sacred document. Their conduct should bring pride to all Americans because they realized that their mission was larger than partisan politics and acted accordingly.

They completed this undertaking with determination, clarity, and vision. On behalf of a grateful Nation, we pledge to continue to work to make their entire vision reality.

Congress and the administration have made many significant changes over the years to improve the security of the homeland. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act signed by the President in December of 2004 was a critical step forward in reor-

ganizing our intelligence community, creating a Director of National Intelligence with personnel and budgetary authority, creating in statute a National Counterterrorism Center, improving our transportation security, and making important immigration reforms.

There are still challenges, however, that need to be met. The Privacy and Civil Liberties Board established by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, for example, should be operating and should be mandated with robust powers to oversee the government's adherence to the guidelines set forth by the 9/11 Commission. This board is critical in ensuring a balance between civil liberties and security.

In addition, more attention needs to be given to aviation security, mass transit issues, and first responders. We need to inspect air cargo that rides in the hold of passenger aircraft, and we must tighten security around mass transit areas.

Furthermore, our first responders must have appropriate communications.

Finally, the 9/11 Commission concluded that Congress needed to dramatically strengthen oversight and focus accountability. The commission recommended a single principal point of oversight and review for homeland security in each House of Congress, preferably a standing committee on homeland security and dedicated appropriations subcommittees on intelligence. We have a dedicated committee in the House of Representatives on homeland security, but it needs to be strengthened.

The Senate still does not have such a committee for Homeland Security.

Today's anniversary reminds us how important it is we implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission and how important it is we protect our Nation from those who would do us harm.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOLIDARITY TRADE UNION IN POLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the workers of the Solidarity Trade Union in Poland. On August 30 we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the worker strikes in Poland that led to the unprecedented establishment of the Solidarity Trade Union.

At the end of the Second World War, Poland was forcefully incorporated into the Soviet Union's Communist Bloc. By 1980, they endured decades of communism, with endemic corruption, the lies of its press, and its denial of basic human and worker rights.

Although major strikes and uprisings had taken place, all of them had been put down violently by military forces and the leaders had been arrested.

Things began to change in 1979 when Pope John Paul II, in his first official visit to his homeland, encouraged the people of Poland to be not afraid. Empowered by the Pope's words, Poles soon began standing up to their communist government.

On August 14, 1980, at the Lenin Shipyard in the Baltic port city of Gdansk, 17,000 workers staged a strike under the leadership of Lech Walesa. Initially formed as a response to increases in the price of food and a dismissal of several popular workers, the strike soon evolved into a broad demand for workers' rights.

In mid-August, 1980, an interfactory strike committee was established in Gdansk to coordinate rapidly spreading strikes there and elsewhere. Within a week, the committee presented the Polish Government with a list of 21 demands ranging from the right to join independent unions and an increase in the minimum wage to broader issues such as censorship.

□ 1300

On September 22, 1980, Solidarity was formally established and became the first independent labor union in any Soviet bloc country. By early 1981 the trade union had a membership of about 10 million people and represented most of the workforce in Poland.

In the early 1980s, Solidarity was forcibly suppressed by the Communist government and Solidarity was declared illegal. Although the union was formally dissolved, it continued as an underground organization. Solidarity reemerged in 1989 to become the first opposition movement to participate in free elections in a post-Soviet bloc nation since the 1940s.

The case of Solidarity, the movement that ended communism in Poland without bloodshed, inspired other nations under Soviet control to do the same and led to the end of the Cold War.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the strikes in Poland. Let us remember Solidarity as the beginning of a great struggle that ended decades of oppression and tyranny in Eastern Europe and led to the establishment of democracy in Poland. We must recognize and forever remember the sacrifice, determination, and struggle that Poland endured to secure their freedom.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. NORWOOD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KOLBE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, today we face a great national security challenge, many challenges in fact.

As we wage a global war on terror, we face an enemy that kills indiscriminately in its campaign against freedom, democracy and political pluralism. The brutal attacks in London just a couple of weeks ago and, of course, the other tragic news that we have gotten from London this week are a tragic reminder of the nature of the enemy that we face. But I believe that the true sign of our times is not the carnage of suicide bombers. It is the image of millions of Iraqis waiting in line to cast their first free votes, and millions more in Afghanistan, the Ukraine, Lebanon, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and on and on and on around the world.

Democracy is sprouting in places that seemed unthinkable and that has been the case for quite a while. The worldwide terror campaign that is being perpetrated and the rise of democracy in formerly inhospitable places are not unrelated. Just the opposite, in fact. The war that is being waged against political and economic freedom and our unwavering resolve to defeat it is pushing oppressed people to a tipping point. They are demanding the right to determine their own futures. And as President Bush has so clearly articulated, the spread of freedom is not just a consequence of the global war on terror. It is our best defense. That is, the spread of freedom is the most important thing that we can do for our national security. Those who embrace the democratic principles of liberty, opportunity and tolerance do not resort to terrorism. Aiding the establishment of democratic and free so-

cieties is squarely within our national interest.

To that end I have had the great privilege of working with our distinguished Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), in the establishment of the House Democracy Assistance Commission. I have joined my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) who is the ranking member of this task force.

The House Democracy Assistance Commission provides a forum for this body to play a significant and proactive role in establishing the strong, independent, transparent legislatures that are essential to a vibrant and healthy democracy. Our commission was established precisely because we realized that spreading freedom throughout the globe is as critical to preserving it right here at home because we realize that we cannot abandon anyone to tyranny.

Just a short time ago most of us could not have imagined millions of Iraqis turning out to vote. But there they were on January 30, defying the terrorists and the world's expectations of what would happen there.

Those of us who have been engaged with Central America over the past 2½ decades have been amazed by the transformation that has taken place there as well. Like their Iraqi counterparts, the people of Central America have made the journey from violence and oppression to democracy and freedom. Many of my colleagues will remember just how difficult that process was.

Two decades ago President Reagan and this body were deeply concerned about the threat posed to the United States by the communist expansion and civil war that existed in our own backyards. As the Cold War neared its fourth decade, violent conflict in El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras had the region in turmoil. Stability, let alone democracy, seemed absolutely unattainable.

Today the region is just as important, Mr. Speaker, to our national interests. But rather than a threat, Central America is an ally and a partner in trade, counter terrorism, drug interdiction, and migration control. Our Central American friends play a vital role in the security and well-being of the United States of America.

Again, for those who remember the struggle of the 1980s, this transformation is no less astounding than the one taking place at this very moment in Iraq. And our commitment to solidifying and strengthening the democratic institutions that are taking root there should be no less firm today than it was a decade and a half ago when this process began.

The people of Central America have embraced democracy, but they now expect concrete results from their democratically elected leaders, and rightly so. They must find new opportunities for prosperity and a higher standard of living or they will question the democratic institutions that have only recently brought peace to that region.